

Education Governance Responses
Brighton Meeting (3/19/07) - Brighton Elementary School

10 Attendees (facilitated by Robin Scheu)

Question #1: What are the advantages and disadvantages of the present education governance system in your community?:

Advantages

Local control: Principal, needs of students
Local communication
Local issues are addressed by local people with a vested interest in making good judgments
Knowledge of local history/issues
Community involved
Local boards access
Meet in the town

Disadvantages

Difficult for superintendent to know and respond to community
Education is not equal throughout the district
Supervisory union is geographically too large (Some students travel 25+ miles to school)
Lack of interest in serving on school boards
Unfilled board positions
Super. not available

Question #2: What are the advantages and disadvantages of the school district model suggested by Commissioner Cate in his White Paper?

Advantages

Combining resources more easily (not just funding)
1 employment contract/mobility
Bookkeeping more efficient
Same vision/philosophy
Superintendent power
One set of expectations
More convenient for superintendent
Uniform response to curriculum issues

Disadvantages

Community less involved
Forced (potentially) consolidation
1/2 pop centers could dominate
Fear of small towns losing school (lose sense of community)
Lack of local control: No local input
Lack of school individuality
Community not involved in hiring faculty and staff
Meetings not easily accessible for community

How will this really save money for OENSU?
Weighted voting disenfranchises smaller schools
Limits the points of view represented

Debrief Comments:

Comments from a school board member: Teach our children to be entrepreneurs so that they can create businesses which provide employment for others to keep people in Vt.
Share AP teachers-smaller schools can't afford one full time.
FRL districts have higher costs with less money

“school based management” system that would act like a regular school board
Financial shortage is generating interest in some sort of change
Look at outcomes of other areas with the same governance system in VT
2 boards: 1 for elementary; 1 for high school
Universal school calendar
Consistency of curriculum ex. Same report cards grade to grade
Possibly sharing resources specifically through technology ex. Like colleges VT interactive tv
Nonresident property taxes should contribute to local education funding
Federal education mandates need to be federally funded
Keep local school boards as is, but create uniform curriculum objectives
Source of school funding must be re-evaluated
Property taxes can't keep pace with educational needs and requirements
Affordable tuition – in-state
Local colleges: offer masters in Educational Leadership
When kids graduate, there are no jobs- we should teach kids to be entrepreneurs or other skills to be employable and successful
Cost of living prohibitive for high school and college grads
State colleges not affordable
Need educational leadership training (not just JSC)
Take advantage of distance learning opportunities